

PUBLIC NOTICE

NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
AND THE
RHODE ISLAND DEPARTMENT OF
ENVIRONMENTAL MANAGEMENT

NORTH CAPE OIL SPILL
REQUEST FOR PUBLIC COMMENT
ON SHELLFISH RESTORATION PLAN/SUPPLEMENTAL
ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT

The Department of Environmental Management, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service invite public comment on a proposed plan to restore shellfish lost as a result of the *North Cape* oil spill in 1996. The proposed plan implements the terms of the consent decree in United States and State of Rhode Island v. E.W. Holding Corp., United States District Court, Civil Action No. CA-00-332T, District of Rhode Island, which specifies that the Trustees use \$1.5 million of the North Cape oil spill settlement funds, plus accrued interest, to complete one or more shellfish restoration projects.

The draft restoration plan/supplemental environmental assessment proposes several projects including:

- (1) conducting a quahaug transplant from the Providence River ship channel in the area proposed for navigational dredging. The quahaugs would be transplanted to Rhode Island's shellfish management areas in Narragansett Bay;
- (2) creating a bay scallop spawning sanctuary in Point Judith Pond and re-seeding bay scallops in several coastal salt ponds;
- (3) seeding hatchery reared native quahaugs in several coastal salt ponds; and,
- (4) implementing an oyster restoration project which will include planting hatchery reared Rhode Island oysters into Narragansett Bay and other potential locations.

Pursuant to earlier notice published in this newspaper, public hearings on this plan were held in Charlestown, Rhode Island on May 7, 2002 and Narragansett, Rhode Island On May 8, 2002. The public comment period on this plan ends on May 24, 2002.

The Draft Restoration Plan/Supplemental Environmental Assessment is available on the following websites: <http://www.darp.noaa.gov/neregion/ncape.htm> or <http://www.state.ri.us/dem>. To request further information, a hard copy of the document, or to submit your comments, please contact: Jim Turek at (401) 782-3338, NOAA Restoration Center, 28 Tarzwell Drive, Narragansett, Rhode Island 02882-1199.